to round up a group of contributors, prepare the copy, and send it to the printer.

Meanwhile the political climate was changing. Under the impact of scandals connected with Rasputin, the monarchy was beginning to cave in. The new Minister of Justice, one of Rasputin's appointees, decided that the best way to rally the good people of Russia around the throne was to expose the diabolic designs of the Jews. Since people were not impressed by the usual Jew-baiting in the Black Hundreds papers, he decided to charge the Jews with kidnaping and murdering Christian children. Such accusations had been made before against some non-existent Jewish sects. This time the task was to prove that the Bible and the Talmud directed *all* Jews to kill Christian children and use their blood. The "Bloody Slander" was to be the prologue to a new wave of pogroms and renewed administrative persecution of Jews throughout Russia.

To herald this new policy, the government arrested a poor Jewish tailor, Beilis, on the outskirts of Kiev and arranged to have him tried before a carefully selected jury of half-illiterate peasants and small merchants.

The affair started in a house well know to police in Kiev as an underworld den. Thieves brought their loot there to pass on to dealers. The woman Cheberiak, who ran the place, also carried on illicit traffic in vodka and was active, together with other underworld characters, in local patriotic organizations. Suddenly her name appeared in the headlines all over Russia. In the woods behind her courtyard, the body of a slain boy was found. His throat had been slashed and his body bore signs of beating and torture.

The neighbors recognized the boy as the nine-year-old son of a couple that owned the house next to the headquarters of the thieves. The mother of the slain boy testified that several days before his disappearance the lad, playing, entered the backyard of the Cheberiak house. The woman Cheberiak caught him, accused him of spying, ordered him to tell exactly what he had seen, and threatened to teach him a lesson. Taken to the police station, she testified that she had seen an old Jew with a butcher knife drag the boy into the woods. She identified him as Beilis, the tailor from the next block. She also remembered the date of the crime, the eve of Passover. . . . Then the police experts discovered that the boy's throat was slashed in accordance with the prescriptions of the Talmud.

The case became the focus of public life in Russia, like the Dreyfus case in France in the 1890's. The public felt that thousands of human lives were at stake. Scores of lawyers—in fact, the elite of the profession, Christians and Jews alike—volunteered to defend the humble tailor. The liberal and moderate press considered the Beilis affair a